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Kansas Health Policy Authority bringing quality health care to Kansans
UniCare Health Plan of Kansas, Inc. and Children's Mercy Family Health Partners chosen to be state Medicaid providers for Kansans

With the responsibility for providing quality health care to low income Kansans, the Kansas Health Policy Authority has announced two new managed care providers for beneficiaries in the state Medicaid and S-CHIP programs (formally known as HealthWave Title XIX and Title XXI Managed Care services). Together, these two programs will reach approximately 160,000 Kansans. The Authority has awarded a statewide contract to UniCare Health Plan of Kansas, Inc. and a contract for Northeastern and Southeastern Kansas to Children's Mercy Family Health Partners.

"Providing quality health care at a competitive price and promoting good health for Kansans is a priority for the Authority. We appreciate the work of Centene/First Guard in providing important services to Kansans and building a climate for a competitive Medicaid managed market," said Dr. Marcia Nielsen, Interim Executive Director of Kansas Health Policy Authority. "After a thorough and competitive bidding process, we are looking to the future of Kansas Medicaid and will be entering a new era of partnership with UniCare and Family Health Partners. Working together, we will provide choices to our consumers and ensure they receive accessible and quality health care they need."

Dr. Nielsen continued, "UniCare has a proven record of providing quality care to its clients. In one state alone, care management offered by UniCare has decreased hospital stays by 38%. With their experience, we are confident Kansans will continue to live healthy lives."

UniCare Health Plan of Kansas, Inc., which will be available statewide, has formed a Kansas-specific Quality Management Plan with a thorough and extensive fraud and abuse plan. In addition, they offer a nationally recognized asthma disease management program, sports physicals for children, statewide childhood obesity program tailored for Kansans, a self-care initiative promoting a medical home and preventing inappropriate use of emergency rooms. Other options include a 24-hour, seven days a week nurse call line and 24-hour teen line. UniCare plans to have two education outreach vans, educating Kansans on the importance of health and wellness.

Children's Mercy Family Health Partners offers non-emergency medical transportation provided to all members and a disease care management program for children with ADHD.

"Family Health Partners provides quality health care and prevention with higher than required standards for physician office wait times. They have a record of increasing blood lead screenings in a neighboring state, and Kansas is looking forward to experiencing the same results," Dr. Nielsen said.

After a thorough bidding and application process, UniCare Health Plan of Kansas, Inc. and Children's Mercy Family Health Partners were selected as vendors. They will begin providing services to Kansans on January 1, 2007.

Centene/FirstGuard was the previous vendor with the contract ending December 31, 2006.

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